



Angela de Hoyos

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*It's the symphony in the kitchen:
la cuchara canta
el molcajete baila
to the concert of hands at work
mixing el guisado: it's the hum of life
unhurried; the ballet of
fingers, spreading
-- with patience of the saints --
ý ý ý ý ý each tiny blanket,
ý ý ý ý ý colchita de masa
upon the water-softened husk of corn;
then comes the filling, now the folding,
and into the pot of steaming broth . . .*

— Tamalada

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Quick Facts

- * Born in 1940
- * Chicana poet and editor
- * Her first book of poetry, *Arise, Chicano!*, was published in 1975

Biography

Angela de Hoyos was born in Coahuila, Mexico, on January 23, 1940. When she was a child her family moved to San Antonio, Texas, where she currently resides. At the age of three she suffered a long convalescence. She spent many months in bed, and by means of entertaining herself, she began an interior monologue of rhymes and verses.

This page was researched and submitted by Leanna Amorim, Julicza Feliciano, Melissa A. Meyer, Kathleen Rogers, and Tamika Porter, as part of Dr. Margaret Roman's ENG 239 - Women's Literature: A Different Voice class at the College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ, on 5/9/02. It was edited and updated by Lauren Curtright on 11/22/04.



Angela de Hoyos

Biography continued

Since she wanted to have her own course of study but had to follow a degree plan, she decided to take a course at the University of Texas at San Antonio College, the Witt Museum, and the San Antonio Art Institute, where she pursued her interest in fine arts and writing. Angela was deeply affected by the Chicano farm workers' struggle. Her early poems were highly political. Her work is often cited as one of the first fruits of the Chicano literary movements. Angela's poetry has been honored with awards in Argentina, India, Italy, Germany, and the United States. Her many art and literary awards include second prize for poetry in the CSSI International Competition, Italy. Her works have been the subject of over one hundred reviews in a dozen different countries.

In Europe, Angela is one of the best known among all of the U.S. Latina writers. Her work has also been translated into fifteen different languages. At the 1994 San Antonio Festival, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award and recognition by the Texas Commission on the Arts. De Hoyos is the publisher and editor of M and A Editions and *Huehuetitlan*, a journal of Chicano culture and poetry.

Angela de Hoyos takes on the tasks of bearing witness, and denouncing the imperative social demands that are inescapable. In the poems she writes, she comes face to face with herself and the world that surrounds her. *Arise, Chicano!* is Angela's first published collection of poems. *Arise, Chicano!* contains a testimonial poetry that denounces that social injustices done to the Chicanos and reflects on their exploited circumstances: "What do the entrails know about the necessity of being white . . . - the advisability of male-order parents?" This quotation from *Arise, Chicano!* offers the theme of being born with or without color. In *Arise, Chicano!* another theme that surfaces is the circumstances that have produced the mental, physical, and spiritual suffering inherited in the loss of Chicano heritage and economic dignity.

In her first book of poetry, Angela condemns the dominant culture and prods Chicanos to recognize the circumstances and do something about it: "or - who knows? - Perhaps tomorrow I shall burst these shackles and rising to my natural full height fling the final parting laugh O gluttonous omnipotent alien white world . . ." The poet's main purpose in *Arise, Chicano!* is to teach and inform. She tends to have a pessimistic overtone but her attitude is not negative; instead, she exhorts Chicanos to be their own saviors. She stresses ethnic differences rather than cultural dominance.



Angela de Hoyos

Biography continued

Racial discrimination is seen as a primary cause of the marginalization of Chicanos. De Hoyos's language in her poetry contains several linguistic devices that are used to create foregrounding. The variations of linguistic dimensions are seen in English and Spanish (or in a mixture). De Hoyos's most important linguistic devices are the Hispanicization of English and the creation of a slanted vernacular in both languages. One of the most notable characteristics in her poetry is the use of English clichés to criticize the dominant culture.

In her second book, *Selected Poems/Selecciones*, de Hoyos uses many of the same styles and linguistic devices as in her first book. *Selected Poems/Selecciones* reflects a deeper concern for the universal themes of life and death. She unfolds her point of view on life and her recognition of the mortality in a humorous way. Both of her books mentioned above contain vocabulary, concepts, images, and symbols that have multiple levels of significance. In *Gata Poems*, which she is currently working on, de Hoyos focuses more on females. This book is humorous in that it pokes fun at middle class women.

De Hoyos writes from a political stance to a philosophical position and then back again to a political point of view. Her poetry offers us the intimate biography of common and universal experiences. She appears to us in her works as a female presence and one of the poets of highest intensity and maturity in the early period of the development of contemporary Chicana literature. The qualities of her poems show that political and social engagements do not conflict with poetry of great inspiration.



Angela de Hoyos

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